

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-11 (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A connecting element for insertion into ends of at least two hollow sections of different cross-section of a transverse beam of an automobile instrument panel, comprising: a frame with side walls extending in a direction x of insertion; and a push-fit body shape-formed by extrusion on the frame so that the frame surrounds the push-fit body, the push fit body having a smaller cross-section than the frame and containing lengths of the frame side walls so that the connecting element has two different cross-sections in the x direction and so that the hollow sections are respectively slideable on the cross-sections so as to extend longitudinally along a substantially common axis in the direction x.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously Presented) A connecting element according to claim 12, wherein the push-fit body forms a corner of the frame.

15. (Previously Presented) A connecting element according to claim 12, wherein a frame bracket is formed onto the frame on an outer side of one of the side walls.

16. (Currently Amended) A connecting element according to claim 15, wherein the side walls are parallel and the frame bracket has arms on the frame aligned with the parallel side walls of the frame.

17. (Previously Presented) A connecting element according to claim 12, and further comprising a sleeve for a bolt at two opposite lying corners within the frame.

18. (Previously Presented) A connecting element according to claim 15, and further comprising a sleeve for a bolt at two opposite lying corners in the frame bracket.

19. (Previously Presented) A connecting element according to claim 12, wherein the push-fit body is arranged to project out of one side of the frame in the direction of insertion (x).

20. (Previously Presented) A connecting element according to claim 15, wherein the frame is configured to project on one side in the direction of insertion beyond a plane defined by an outer edge of the frame bracket.

21. (Previously Presented) A connecting element according to claim 20, wherein on an opposite side of the frame bracket the push-fit body projects beyond a plane defined by the outer edge.